FD-36 (Rev. 3-22-64)

FBI

Date: 3-18-69

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TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)

FROM: SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1987) P

MURKIN

There are enclosed two copies of report of Captain RICHARD M. DAWSON, one of the officers who accompanied RAY during his transfer from custody of the Sheriff's Department, Memphis, to the Tennessee State Prison, Nashville.

5648

3 BUREAU (Enc. ~~2~~) (AM)
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EX-104

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

66 MAR 2 1969

Statement of RICHARD M. DAWSON, Captain of the Tennessee Highway Patrol, station at Jackson, Tennessee. Made in the Attorney General's Office at 11:40 A.M. on Tuesday, March 18, 1969. Questioned by John L. Carlisle. Typed by Mrs. Loretta Bonadna.

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Relative to the JAMES EARL RAY case.

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Q. Captain Dawson, on the morning of March 11, 1969, did you, or other officers of the Tennessee Highway Patrol, accompany James Earl Ray to the State Penitentiary at Nashville?

A. Yes sir, I did.

Q. Would you name the officers that accompanied you and relate any discussion as you can recall between Ray and any of the officers.

A. Yes sir. We assumed custody of Ray at approximately 5:20 A.M. in the Highway Patrol Station on Summer Avenue, Memphis. He was placed in the rear seat of the automobile. I sat on his left. Commissioner O'Rear was on his right. Inspector Mickey McGuire drove. Deputy Commissioner Bud Hopton sat in the front on the right. I recall some...for the first 15-20 minutes, there was very little conversation. As we continued on, Ray made some remarks concerning the landscape and scenery. I remember asking Ray that yesterday was his birthday and he looked like he had celebrated it with a bang. He said, hell, yesterday wasn't my birthday. I've lied to them so much they don't know when I was born,..or words to that effect. I remember Inspector McGuire asking Ray then if the articles in Look Magazine pertaining to his case were in fact truth. Ray responded...hell no, about 90% of it is lies and Huie now knows about the time that I was in a mental institution and I understand that his next article is going to say that I'm crazy. I also remember McGuire asking Ray if he had been in Nashville before. Ray said that is where the Grand Ol' Opry [illegible]

made that one of them, we understood, was in the [illegible] police officer and he laughed heartily, but he did [illegible] He made no reference to the crime itself. He did ask [illegible] if he would be placed in a cell or be allowed to be outside some and he was told that he should take this up with the [illegible] of the institution. He indicated that he sure wished they would not lock him in a cell. I recall that he said he had sure messed up and if it was to do over, he would not have pleaded guilty to the offense. We arrived at the Penitentiary at 8:06 and Ray was released to the prison authorities.

Q. That's all, thank you.

RICHARD M. DAWSON

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